To End 40 Years of Lefebvreism

Forty years. It's been exactly forty years since Archbishop Lefebvre published his famous declaration of November 21, 1974[1]. In Itinéraires, Jean Madiran went so far as to write that it was "the charter of the Church Militant."

It is, in fact, the main founding act of Lefebvre, and all those who claim to be followers of the founder of Ecône still fully endorse it today. This is the case in Suresnes and Menzingen, who celebrated the fortieth anniversary of this declaration by sharing it on the websites La Porte Latine and Dici. The anti-felay dissidents of the Union Priestly Marcel Lefebvre (USML) also openly claim to be part of this declaration. Father Bruno, national coordinator of the USML, published this same text on the Union's official website, Faithful France, and wrote that "this magnificent text is the charter of our struggle. (...) We make (this declaration) our own."

[1] This article was written in 2014.

At first glance, one might be surprised: how is it possible that enemy brothers, with diametrically opposed views on the principle of an agreement with "modernist Rome," can claim, with the same enthusiasm and beautiful unanimity, the declaration of November 21, 1974?

The answer is simple: it is because, in this declaration, in the document of the founder of Lefebvreism, we find summarized and concentrated all the fundamental incoherence of the Lefebvrist movement and thought.

In this document, Archbishop Lefebvre recognizes in Paul VI and his contemporaries in the Vatican both the modernist Rome (which must be disobeyed) and the eternal Rome (to which one must be faithful).

Indeed, this statement cannot be understood otherwise, for those who thought and said that modernist Rome was in no way the eternal Rome and was therefore illegitimate, heretical, apostate, and without any authority were systematically expelled from the SSPX. This still applies today, as the expulsion of all priests or seminarians convicted of sedevacantism quickly became a national (and even international) sport within the Society.

Furthermore, in this declaration, which superficial and false minds consider magnificent, although theologically null and absurd, entirely in the image of its author, Archbishop Lefebvre publicly recognizes the authority of Paul VI, whom he describes as "Holy Father," "Supreme Pontiff," and "Successor of Peter." Three times in this declaration, the founder of the SSPX publicly recognizes Montini as the Vicar of Christ. Hats off!

Worse still (if one can say so), in this text, Archbishop Lefebvre introduces the principle of Protestant free examination, which consists of examining the words and actions of the one he recognizes as the successor of Peter: "if a certain contradiction appears in his words and actions (those of Paul VI, whom he recognized as pope) as well as in the actions of the dicasteries, then we choose what has always been taught and turn a deaf ear to the destructive innovations of the Church."

In other words, Archbishop Lefebvre establishes himself as a parallel magisterium, while simultaneously recognizing the authority of Paul VI.

It is now up to him to classify (in the name of what authority? What infallibility? What legitimacy?) what is Catholic, what is acceptable, what is in conformity with Tradition, and what is not in the words and actions of those he recognizes as vicars of Christ.

This is an exorbitant statement, for who is the infallible guarantor of Tradition if not the Magisterium, if not the Pope, who is, let us remember, the living and immediate rule of faith?

It is up to the Pope to say authoritatively what is in conformity with Tradition and what is not, what is Catholic and what is not. If someone thinks and acts otherwise, they cease to be Catholic.

Where Peter is, there is the Church.

We see, then, that Lefebvreism attacks the very foundations of the Church, vitiating the act of faith. For, if we believe in the truths of faith (the object of revelation), it is because God revealed them (the author of revelation) and the Church teaches them to us (the rule of faith).

The Church, therefore, enjoys doctrinal infallibility. Adopting Lefebvrist discourse is nothing more than attacking the rock on which the Church rests.

Traditionalists must be truly relativistic and completely uninterested in doctrinal matters to constantly have St. Marcellus on their lips here, St. Marcellus there (let us remember, by the way, that Bishop Williamson founded a St. Marcellus initiative, that Father Philippe Laguérie, who was expelled from the SSPX in 2004 and whom Suresnes sent guards and dogs to drive out of the priory in Bruges, founded a cult of St. Marcellus, that his supporters ran a website called Fraternité Canal Historique (Historic Fraternity of the Canal), and that those who today surround Richard Williamson are grouped in the Marcel Lefebvre Priestly Union).

As if he were already a saint canonized by the Holy Church! Even Father Abrahamowicz created a Domus Marcel Lefebvre in Italy. (We really can't escape that!)

Like me, as an old sedevacantist priest jokingly confided, we shouldn't expect much from the priests who are leaving the SSPX today (or who have been expelled from it), because after spending 10, 20, 30, or 40 years in a septic tank, it's normal for them to smell bad!

Or, as a woman at the forefront of the ultra-sedevacantist struggle (I love that!) for half a century said to me: "What good did you expect to come out of a poisoned spring like Lefebvre?" It's hard to disagree with her. We've written this many times: Archbishop Lefebvre is like the Bazaar at the Hôtel de Ville in Paris: you find everything there... and its opposite!

This is why, in the current divisions of the SSPX and its sister communities, people exchange contradictory, yet perfectly authentic, statements by Archbishop Lefebvre to justify their position.

Each presents himself as a true disciple of the late founder of the SSPX, as guardian of the Lefebvrian Order of the Temple, without ever asking whether these fratricidal divisions stem precisely from the inconsistencies, procrastination, and, let's be frank, duplicity of Archbishop Lefebvre, who, to say the least, is not a model of invariance.

In April 2012, the bishops of the SSPX exchanged harsh and cruel letters, containing contradictory, yet authentic, quotes from Archbishop Lefebvre. The accordists highlight the numerous statements and positions of the founder of Ecône in favor of agreements with the Vatican occupiers; Anti-accordists highlight Archbishop Lefebvre's own numerous statements against the accords. But everyone remains unconditionally Lefebvre-like, without question! Isn't that wonderful?

If Archbishop Lefebvre said everything and its opposite, it's because he didn't dare cross the Rubicon.

Due to their diplomatic, liberal, and consensual temperament, cowardice, fear of the consequences — in short, for essentially worldly reasons.

But there is nothing worse than those who do not carry their struggle to the end. God vomits out the lukewarm. Lukewarmness is already a form of betrayal, perhaps the worst there is.

It must be remembered that Archbishop Lefebvre reacted too late to the revolution in the Church.

Thus, he refused to sign the Brief Critical Examination of Cardinals Ottaviani and Bacci (incidentally, the text had been written by Father Guérard des Lauriers, much more doctrinal than the founder of the SSPX, even if his thesis doesn't convince us at all!), signed all the texts of Vatican II, contrary to what he had falsely claimed for years (it was only with the biography of Bishop Tissier de Mallerais that this legend was dispelled), and he requested (and obtained) the necessary authorizations from the (pseudo)conciliar authorities for the creation of the Society and the seminary in 1970.

Archbishop Lefebvre was, therefore, not a dam-breaker, a valiant fighter for the faith.

Where we needed an athlete of the faith, we had a diplomat. Where we needed a confessor of the faith, we had a pragmatic and adventurous prelate. Where we needed a tireless killer of heresies and apostasies, we had a politician trying to negotiate a place within the conciliar Church.

Where we needed to form ardent souls, ardent souls, ready for any sacrifice, any persecution, we had only cowards in love with the Monsignor (the Bishop said, the Bishop did, the Bishop thinks...). Hypocrites were promoted, men without substance, without conviction, without backbone: Lorans, Schmidbergers, Simoulins, Bouchacourts, de La Rocques, worthy heirs of the late Colonel de La Rocques, known for his moderation and strict legalism regarding the Third Masonic Republic, Fellays who, in civilian life, could not have hoped for anything better than a department manager at Migros!

If all these people weren't blinded by the sectarian cult they devote to a mere bishop without jurisdiction, and if they were even minimally capable of critical thinking, of maintaining a critical distance from their mentor, they would have understood that the repeated crises of the SSPX over the past forty years have no other origin than Archbishop Lefebvre's doctrinal inconsistencies, his versatility.

Depending on his interests at the time, his interlocutors, his listeners, he was capable of saying anything and everything. Even within the same speech, the same homily.

It would be instructive to write a book about the permanent contradictions of the former Archbishop of Dakar. On the right-hand page, we would place the declarations of rupture with modernism and the Vatican, and on the left, those in favor of a practical agreement. The result would be edifying.

And it is false to say that these contradictions were merely the result of a "delayed ignition," of the obscurity of the situation, and that they gradually dissipated, with time helping him see more clearly.

In September 1987, he declared that Rome was in apostasy, that all these people had left or were leaving the Church, that no collaboration with them could be had, even if they appointed a bishop, even if they lifted the sanctions against the SSPX.

And almost immediately after this apparently firm statement, he engaged in discussions with the Vatican that resulted in the signing of the memorandum of understanding on May 5, 1988. This is no less regrettable than the protocol signed 24 years later by Bishop Fellay.

In both declarations, the new code of canon law of 1983, the validity of the new Mass and all the new sacraments, the authority of the occupant of the See of Peter, and even Vatican II are explicitly recognized and approved.

The document signed by Archbishop Lefebvre states: "We declare that we accept the doctrine contained in number 25 of the Dogmatic Constitution *Lumen Gentium* of the Second Vatican Council on the Ecclesiastical Magisterium and adherence to it."

Archbishop Fellay's statement says: "The Second Vatican Council, for its part, clarifies—that is, deepens and further clarifies—certain aspects of the life and doctrine of the Church, implicitly present in it or not yet conceptually formulated."

Archbishop Lefebvre certainly withdrew his signature the following day (May 6, 1988), but, like Archbishop Fellay after him, he never truly retracted the substance of the preamble.

He even made several subsequent statements in which he asserted that this preamble was not truly bad or unacceptable, otherwise he would not have signed it.

What ultimately prevented the agreement at the time was a lack of trust in their Roman interlocutors, not in doctrine, faith, or intangible principles.

The disagreement arose over the membership of the Roman commission responsible for "tradition" and Archbishop Lefebvre's doubts about his interlocutors' willingness to grant him an SSPX bishop to ensure the survival of his work.

To justify having, however, continued with the act of consecrating bishops without a papal mandate, publicly recognizing the authority of John Paul II and affirming to be in communion with him in the canon of the Mass, that is, in the most important, most sacred part of the Holy Sacrifice, and although a year earlier he had confided in an interview with Michel Reboul in Monde et vie that, if he consecrated bishops without a papal mandate, he would be schismatic, Archbishop Lefebvre used a regrettable argument, worthy of his personality: "the tents are rented", "the people paid for the hotel", in short, there is no going back.

On the day of the consecrations, in his homily, Archbishop Lefebvre had requested that these famous words of St. Paul be engraved on his tomb: "*Tradidi quod et accepi*." I have transmitted what I have received. His disciples obviously obeyed his recommendation. And his followers still delight in this statement today.

However, this is also an imposture: where did Archbishop Lefebvre learn that an ecumenical council promulgated by a true pope could be fallible and merely pastoral?

Where did he read that bishops could be consecrated against the explicit and public will of the one recognized as the vicar of Christ?

Where did he learn that the ordinary and universal *magisterium* of the Church was not necessarily infallible, or that, for it to be so, consensus was necessary not only in space but also in time?

Where did he learn that one could maintain a seminary, train and ordain priests against the formal order of the authority considered legitimate?

Where did he learn that one can confer the sacrament of Confirmation in any diocese in the world without even referring to those recognized as legitimate residential bishops?

Where did he learn that one can call oneself Catholic and disobey in every way the one publicly recognized as the Vicar of Christ?

From what Catholic theology manual did he learn that canonizations performed by a true pope may not be infallible, that a Mass, a code of canon law, a catechism, a ritual of sacraments promulgated by the Pope for the universal Church can be harmful and dangerous to the faith?

Where did he learn that he could expel forever from his so-called fraternity, without any hesitation, priests and deacons he had ordained for the sole reason that, in conscience, they could not claim to be in communion with the canon of the Mass with the occupants of the See of Peter who were destroying the Church?

Where did he learn that it was possible to throw them out into the street without any remorse, without any concern for their survival, their social security, their misery, their abandonment?

In this, moreover, Bishop Fellay is a worthy heir to Archbishop Lefebvre.

And it is this wretched man who is presented as a saint, as a hero and athlete of the faith, as the savior of the Church and Tradition. At the same time, he was their most formidable and effective gravedigger.

As the late Father Barbara wrote harshly but accurately: after John XXIII, Paul VI, and John Paul II (and, we might add today, Benedict XVI and Francis), Archbishop Lefebvre was one of the foremost destroyers of the Church Militant, the most formidable adversary of sedevacantism and, therefore, of Catholic truth.

How many priests and laypeople have told me that they would have become sedevacantists without Archbishop Lefebvre, in whom they had mistakenly placed their complete trust?

This disastrous record is certainly not a source of pride.

Every time a crucial choice had to be made, Lefebvre made the wrong choice: on the validity of the Mass and the new sacraments, on the authority of the illegitimate occupants of the See of Peter, on the acceptance of John XXIII's liturgy and breviary, on the selection of men for key positions.

The Society of Saint Pius X is a bit like the Communist Party in its heyday. You must unconditionally follow the party line, even when it changes (and it changes frequently). If you don't, you'll be mercilessly expelled.

Writing the history of the Society over the past forty years is writing the history of its purges, its exclusions.

Therefore, it's not surprising that this entire environment is increasingly less credible on the human, intellectual, and doctrinal levels. An edifice built on sand like this cannot bear good fruit. What keeps the SSPX alive is the strength of its structure and the tyranny of its leadership. Therefore, it can still endure for some time: after all, political parties themselves, despite their betrayals, their crimes, and the multiple scandals that stain them, remain alive and well for decades.

But if the structure remains legally intact, one might ask: what will remain of Lefebvreism in twenty or thirty years, once the SSPX and its friendly communities have been completely absorbed into the conciliar Church, when it will be the false conciliar prelates who confer ordinations and confirmations? Probably nothing.

Or very little. Archbishop Lefebvre will have saved absolutely nothing.

Not even the Mass, since tomorrow it will be invalid conciliar "bishops" who perform ordinations within the SSPX.

And even if they use the traditional rite, it will have no effect, since these conciliar "bishops" are neither priests nor bishops, having been ordained and consecrated within the framework of Montini's new ordination and consecration ritual of June 18, 1968.

A certain number of rank-and-file priests are not in tune with Menzingen's current policy, but they follow it anyway because they don't know where else to turn. They are lost, and courage is not their chief virtue. It must be said that, with such a founder, they were, I dare say, in a good school.

And what can we say about the four bishops, each more deplorable than the last, including Richard Williamson, who gives the greatest credence to the pseudo-Marian apparitions to an enlightened member of the SSPX and who multiplies in his Kyrie Eleison the stupid and absurd attacks against sedevacantism, thus demonstrating once again that compromising with it is a dead end.

Archbishop Lefebvre, of course, chose his bishops well. They are and will die Lefebvrists, by the way, even if they hate each other!

As for the priests hostile to the Menzingen policy, they prefer to submit to terror rather than endure the false trials that Father Pinaud or Father Salenave experienced.

As in the Stalinist trials, the "guilty" party had to acknowledge their guilt and ask forgiveness from the tyrant of Menzingen, the associate of the billionaire businessman and Zionist Maximilian Krah. They don't try to convince the accused that they are mistaken, that they are doctrinally wrong, that they are in error. No, they must confess their guilt, publicly ask forgiveness from the great helmsman, promise not to do it again, and obey the party line in every way.

This is how Archbishop Lefebvre acted in his time: he refused to meet with those who had abandoned him or whom he had excluded until they repented and asked for his forgiveness.

Father Seuillot, for example, told us that this is how Archbishop Lefebvre proceeded in his case. As a result, the interview never took place.

With Father Zins, it is even worse: he led him to believe that he would agree to meet him; Father Zins, penniless, traveled extensively to see him, and finally agreed never to meet him, making him wait a long time.

But, aside from that, Marcel Lefebvre is certainly a saint in heaven!

It should also be noted that, within the so-called Society, the methods are the same, both on the left and on the right: Father Aulagnier was unceremoniously dismissed in 2003 (by a simple fax—it's hard to go any further in administrative dryness) for having approved the Campos Accords.

This is even more ironic given that it was Menzingen who asked the Campos priests to sit beside him at the negotiating table with the Vatican in 2000-2001. And everyone knows today that Bishop Fellay was already working on the agreement that Father Aulagnier sincerely desired to reach with the Vatican. But Paul Aulagnier simply made the mistake of declaring himself too early, and too openly, a supporter of the agreement.

Bishop Fellay, in turn, wanted to achieve the same goal through cunning, lies, and duplicity. Hence the orchestration of a double discourse for fifteen years: an ad intra discourse against the agreements in his homilies, his conferences, in Cor Unum. And an ad extra discourse (notably through his discreet and effective channel, the GREC) in favor of rapprochement and an agreement with "modernist Rome."

It is difficult to go any further in this manipulation.

Naturally, for many years, the Lefebvrist troops saw nothing wrong with this. And now that Fellay has gotten rid of Bishop Williamson, the Dominicans of Avrillé, the Benedictines of Nova Friburgo, and the most agitated priests against any prospect of an agreement, everything indicates that the SSPX will join the conciliar sect in the coming months, or more likely, in the coming years.

As we can see, the Society of Saint Pius X has historically served only to channel and neutralize Catholic resistance to Vatican II and the detestable reforms that resulted from it.

Just as the National Front may have managed to neutralize French resistance to globalism and the destruction of France. You'd have to have the brain of a hummingbird not to notice.

So, what should those who wish to remain fully Catholic do in the current darkness?

Pray, sanctify themselves, maintain the faith in all its integrity, and clearly see the modernist heresy and the imposture of Lefebvreism.

In short, the conciliar Church is not the Catholic Church; those who have occupied the See of Peter since John XXIII are not the vicars of Christ; Archbishop Lefebvre is not the savior of tradition, but its gravedigger.

Everything else is nonsense.

Petrus

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